

MEMO

DATE: December 6, 2007

TO: Community, Economic and Human Development

FROM: Peter Brandenburg, Senior Planner, 213-236-1837, brandenb@scag.ca.gov

SUBJECT: Compass Blueprint “Toolbox Tuesdays”

BACKGROUND:

As part of the ongoing effort to implement the Compass Blueprint/2% Strategy and encourage local-level planning and projects consistent with the Compass principles, SCAG will be offering an ongoing series of training classes for local government planners. Training will provide planners with the necessary skills to use several of the computer-based tools at the core of the Compass Blueprint Suite of Services, including:

- Photomorph and fly-through **visualizations**
- **Tipping-Point**/Return-on-investment analysis
- Envision **GIS scenario-building** tools

Each of the tools was initially developed by the Fregonese Associates-led Compass Blueprint consultant team. SCAG Community Development staff are now trained in their use and able to assist communities through the Suite of Services. Toolbox Tuesdays will further spread these skills, building capacity for innovative planning at the local level and strengthening SCAG’s role as a technical assistance provider for its members.

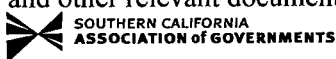
These tools have proven to be the most popular services offered by SCAG and the consultant team in completed and ongoing Demonstration Projects. Demand for the tools stems from their usefulness and the fact that most local planning departments lack the necessary capacity and software to manipulate digital images, simulate development pro-formas and build alternative growth scenarios.

After training, planners will be able to:

- Use Photoshop, SketchUp and Google Earth to *create still-photo, three-dimensional and video representations* of potential futures at any scale from a street intersection to the region or beyond. Visualizations can be more effective than spreadsheets and zoning codes in communicating what the future might look like and can reassure stakeholders that change could be a good thing;
- Use an Excel application to *analyze potential development by projecting developers’ profit* based on the full range of building, site, market and regulatory parameters; and test whether alternative zoning and regulatory policies are likely to stimulate or prevent private-sector investment;
- *Use GIS to build and map alternative growth scenarios* for their communities and, for each, output a wealth of detailed data on development and building types that can then be input to the Tipping Point and visualization tools. This is the same technology used to create the growth scenarios for the 2008 RTP.

Take-Home Materials

Planners will also be provided with hard-copy, written guides to the training material, a DVD-ROM with GIS, forecast/growth scenario, census and other data, software to install on their own computers, powerpoint presentations and other relevant documents, and a handsome certificate recognizing their completion of training.



MEMO

Logistics

Training will be a series of **half to full-day intensive classes**, each covering one of the planning tools. Classes will be held in the SCAG training room for up to 16 attendees or at another suitable venue. A prerequisite skill set (e.g. Tipping Point students should be familiar with Excel) will be identified for each class.

Initial classes will be co-instructed by SCAG Community Development and Fregonese Associates staff. Ongoing classes will be instructed by SCAG Community Development planners Peter Brandenburg (visualizations), Pria Hidisyan (Tipping Point/ROI analysis) and Lingqian Hu (Envision GIS). In addition to local government planning staff, participation may be opened to interested SCAG staff and other stakeholders.

The initial three classes are scheduled for:

- Tuesday, November 20, 2007 - *Beginning Visualizations* (completed)
- Tuesday, December 11, 2007 - *Tipping Point/ROI*
- Tuesday, January 15, 2008 - *Envision GIS*

All classes will run from **10:00 am to 3:00 pm**, with a one-hour lunch break and the training room will be available until 5:00 pm if people would like to stay for extra help.

The training series will be publicized with announcements at policy and technical advisory committees, an email blast to the Compass Blueprint mailing list, mailing to local planning departments, the SCAG, Compass Blueprint and Planetizen websites, and work by the Compass outreach team to reach other audiences and organizations.

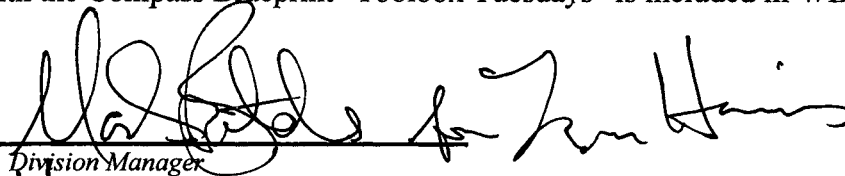
The ongoing schedule will be determined based on feedback from the initial classes but is currently estimated to include 10-12 classes per year. Topics for ongoing training may include repeating basic training on the three primary tools, follow-on advanced training on the tools, introducing other computer-based tools such as the LOTS online GIS or ArcGIS, or non-computer-based tools such as design charrettes or interactive scenario-building workshops (the "chip game").

Costs for the initial training will be limited to Fregonese Associates consultant time and are accounted for in the scope and budget of the existing consultant contract. Fregonese Associates is providing the Tipping Point and Envision software applications **free-of-charge to SCAG** and training participants. Free or temporary licenses for the other necessary software applications have been acquired for the three initial classes.

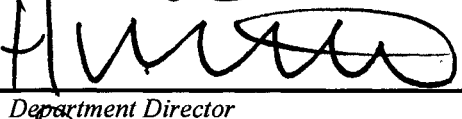
FISCAL IMPACT:

Work associated with the Compass Blueprint "Toolbox Tuesdays" is included in WBS #08-065.SCGS1.

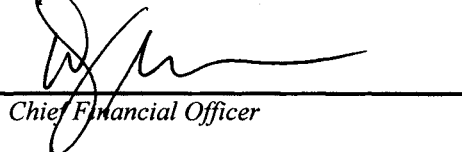
Reviewed by:


Division Manager


Reviewed by:


Department Director

Reviewed by:


Chief Financial Officer


A VISION. A PLAN. A COMMITMENT.



"Toolbox Tuesdays"
Suite of Services training for local government planners

Continuity, Scalability and Market Development / November 6, 2007

Peter Brandenburg
Senior Regional Planner
Southern California Association
of Governments




 **COMPASS BLUEPRINT** **FREE Training**

Planning tools previously available only through consultant-supported Demonstration Projects

- **Nov. 20:** Photomorph and fly-through visualizations
- **Dec. 11:** Tipping-Point Return-on-Investment analysis





 **COMPASS BLUEPRINT** **Beginning Visualization**
November 20, 2007

Software:

- Photoshop
- SketchUp
- Google Earth

Generate potential futures at any scale

- Still photo
- 3-D
- Video

